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CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method in a data processing system for conducting an inventory of the data processing system, the method comprising:
 - launching a basic input output system during a boot process for the data processing system, wherein the basic input output system creates a hardware report of the data processing system; and
 - sending the hardware report to a remote data processing system on the network.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the remote data processing system is a listener server.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the report is formatted in extensible mark up language, hypertext markup language, text in a flat file, or simple network management protocol.
4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - selecting a default listener server as the remote data processing.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - identifying listener servers on the network;
 - presenting a list of the listener servers, wherein user input is received containing a selection of a select

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listener server for reporting hardware changes in the data processing system; and

saving the selection as a default listener server.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the identifying step includes:

broadcasting a network message requesting listener servers on the network to announce themselves; and

compiling responses from the listener servers to form the list.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the identifying, presenting, and saving steps are initiated in response to an absence of a default listener server being present on the network.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein hardware report is used to identify changes to the data processing system.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the listener server runs asset management software.

10. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

waiting for an acknowledgement of the hardware report from the remote data processing system;

responsive to an absence of an acknowledgment, selecting a second remote data processing system; and

sending the hardware report to the second remote data processing system.

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11. A method in a data processing system for identifying hardware in the data processing system, the method comprising:

responsive to booting of the computer, identifying the hardware in the data processing system to form an inventory prior to passing control to an operating system;

creating report containing the inventory of the hardware prior to passing control to the operating system; and

sending the report to a default listener server on the network using a communications interface prior to passing control to the operating system.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the method is implemented in a basic input output system.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the listener server is a default listener server.

14. The method of claim 11 further comprising:

responsive to an absence of the default listener server, identifying listener servers on the network;

presenting a list of the listener servers for selection; and

responsive to a selection of a listener server, saving the selection as the default listener server.

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15. A data processing system for conducting an inventory of the data processing system, the data processing system comprising:

launching means for launching a basic input output system during a boot process for the data processing system, wherein the basic input output system creates a hardware report of the data processing system; and

sending means for sending the hardware report to a remote data processing system on the network.

16. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the remote data processing system is a listener server.

17. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the report is formatted in extensible mark up language, hypertext markup language, text in a flat file, or simple network management protocol.

18. The data processing system of claim 15 further comprising:

selecting means for selecting a default listener server as the remote data processing.

19. The data processing system of claim 15 further comprising:

identifying means for identifying listener servers on the network;

presenting means for presenting a list of the listener servers, wherein user input is received containing a selection of a select a listener server for

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reporting hardware changes in the data processing system;
and

saving means for saving the selection as a default
listener server.

20. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the
identifying means includes:

broadcasting means for broadcasting a network
message requesting listener servers on the network to
announce themselves; and

compiling means for compiling responses from the
listener servers to form the list.

21. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the
identifying means, presenting means, and saving means are
initiated in response to an absence of a default listener
server being present on the network.

22. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein
hardware report is used to identify changes to the data
processing system.

23. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the
listener server runs asset management software.

24. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the
sending means is a first sending means, and further
comprising:

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waiting means for waiting for an acknowledgement of the hardware report from the remote data processing system;

selecting means, responsive an absence of an acknowledgment, for selecting a second remote data processing system; and

second sending means for sending the hardware report to the second remote data processing system.

25. A data processing system in a data processing system for identifying hardware in the data processing system, the data processing system comprising:

identifying means responsive to booting of the computer, for identifying the hardware in the data processing system to form an inventory prior to passing control to an operating system;

creating means for creating report containing the inventory of the hardware prior to passing control to the operating system; and

sending means for sending the report to a default listener server on the network using a communications interface prior to passing control to the operating system.

26. The data processing system of claim 25, wherein the method is implemented in a basic input output system.

27. The data processing system of claim 26, wherein the listener server is a default listener server.

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28. The data processing system of claim 25, wherein the identifying means is a first identifying means, and further comprising:

second identifying means, responsive to an absence of the default listener server, for identifying listener servers on the network;

presenting means for presenting a list of the listener servers for selection; and

saving means, responsive to a selection of a listener server, for saving the selection as the default listener server.

29. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for conducting an inventory of the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for launching a basic input output system during a boot process for the computer program product, wherein the basic input output system creates a hardware report of the data processing system; and

second instructions for sending the hardware report to a remote data processing system on the network.

30. The computer program product of claim 29, wherein the remote data processing system is a listener server.

31. The computer program product of claim 29, wherein the report is formatted in extensible mark up language, hypertext markup language, text in a flat file, or simple network management protocol.

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32. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising:

third instructions for selecting a default listener server as the remote data processing system.

33. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising:

fourth instructions for identifying listener servers on the network;

fifth instructions for presenting a list of the listener servers, wherein user input is received containing a selection of a select a listener server for reporting hardware changes in the data processing system; and

sixth instructions for saving the selection as a default listener server.

34. The computer program product of claim 33, wherein the fourth instructions includes:

first sub instructions for broadcasting a network message requesting listener servers on the network to announce themselves; and

second sub instructions for compiling responses from the listener servers to form the list.

35. The computer program product of claim 33, wherein the fourth instructions, fifth instructions, and sixth instructions are initiated in response to an absence of a default listener server being present on the network.

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36. The computer program product of claim 29, wherein hardware report is used to identify changes to the data processing system.

37. The computer program product of claim 29, wherein the listener server runs asset management software.

38. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising:

third instructions for waiting for an acknowledgement of the hardware report from the remote data processing system;

fourth instructions, responsive an absence of an acknowledgment, for selecting a second remote data processing system; and

fifth instructions for sending the hardware report to the second remote data processing system.

39. A computer program product for identifying hardware in the computer program product comprising:

first instructions responsive to booting of the computer, for identifying the hardware in the data processing system to form an inventory prior to passing control to an operating system;

second instructions for creating report containing the inventory of the hardware prior to passing control to the operating system; and

third instructions for sending the report to a default listener server on the network using a

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communications interface prior to passing control to the operating system.

40. The computer program product of claim 39, wherein the method is implemented in a basic input output system.

41. The computer program product of claim 40, wherein the listener server is a default listener server.

42. The method of claim 39 further comprising:

fourth instructions responsive to an absence of the default listener server, for identifying listener servers on the network;

fifth instructions for presenting a list of the listener servers for selection; and

sixth instructions responsive to a selection of a listener server, for saving the selection as the default listener server.

43. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and
a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to launch a basic input output system during a boot process for the data processing system, wherein the basic input output system creates a hardware report of the data processing system and to send the hardware report to a remote data processing system on the network.